

# Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 33 | Min 23 | Humidity 55%

Partly Cloudy

Sensex 74,119 | Nifty 22,493 | Gold 66,019 | Silver 74,280 | Dollar 82.75 | Euro 90.56 | GBP 106.40



## AUTOMETRIC

Beyond bike taxi ban

PAGE 4



## FOREST BLAZE

Who started BRT fire?

PAGE 6

**Along Gandhi Bazaar Main Road, residents, traders are at loggerheads with BBMP over space for street vendors**

# LOST IN SPACE

**'Design not in line with High Court's specifications'**



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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**T**he Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), along with the Directorate of Urban Land Transport, undertook renovation of Gandhi Bazaar Main Road nearly 18 months ago.

While officials maintain that the work is completed, the plight of the residents and traders along the stretch is far from over.

**“There have been three deaths on the stretch over the past year after renovation started**

— Guru Prasad, secretary, Heritage Basavanagudi Residents' Welfare Forum

Locals are now at loggerheads with BBMP over the design of street vendors' space on pavements.

After multiple deliberations, the civic agency worked out a design and installed a mock-up sample of the proposed shade. The idea was to invite people to

comment on the usefulness of the structure. The model was to be set up after tearing down the iron canopy that was in place.

However, BBMP officials said while the sample was installed two weeks ago, they have not received any public response yet. “We have installed one mock-

up for street vendors. It was installed two weeks ago but we are still waiting for public feedback. The idea is to understand from the public if the structure is working fine and pedestrian friendly. Currently, we have put up one and we need to take

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>**

**Why policy makers should focus on children**

Of 1,751 questions raised in budget session, just 109 were child-centric



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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**T**he recent legislative session has exposed the apathy and negligence of elected representatives when it comes to raising issues related to children's welfare. Elected representatives, including ministers were seen busy making allegations and counter allegations but not many were bothered to discuss children's issues, especially pertaining to medical and educational facilities.

As per the analysis prepared by Child Rights Trust Director Nagasimha G Rao, 1,751 questions were raised in the budget session and among them only 109 were child-centric.

While ruling Congress members raised 39 child-related queries among 777 questions they raised, the BJP members raised 55 among 773 of their queries. The JD(S) members raised only 12 child-centric queries among the 178 queries raised by them.

Sarvodaya Karnataka Paksha member Darshan Puttannaiah raised 12 queries but not a single question was pertaining to children's welfare. Kalyana Rajya Pragathi Paksha member G Janardhan Reddy did not raise any query during the budget session.

Even members of legislative council (MLCs) were nonchalant about child welfare. The lone independent member

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 >>**

## 3 THINGS TO DO



### 01 Write thing

Writer Gouri Dange takes the lid off the 'mystique' of being a published writer. Whether you are published, unpublished, self-published, overpublished, underpublished, maybe-published, pretend-published... you will recognise many of your secret indignities as well as silent triumphs in these hilarious readings from her diary. Gouri Dange is the author of 9 books – three fiction, six non-fiction and one children's book. **Where:** Atta Galatta, 1st Stage Indiranagar **When:** March 15, 7.30 pm



### 02 Shop on

Hosieries, handloom items, a variety of household articles, clothes compatible for summer in riot of colours are on display. The special focus of this exhibition-cum-sale is that the items are women-Centric as it commenced on International Women's Day. Each and every item is available under one single roof. Artisans from different parts of the country have displayed their items that are aesthetically manufactured. **Where:** Chitrakala Parishat **When:** Ongoing till March 17

### 03 All art

Sandeep & Gitanjali Maini Foundation, Bengaluru and Palette People, Kochi, are presenting 'Chitrakoodam: A Tribute to CN Karunakaran', a comprehensive exhibition celebrating the life and art of one of Kerala's most distinguished artists. This exhibition is set to showcase the prolific work of an artist who played a pivotal role in the modern art movement of independent India. **Where:** Maini Sadan, 7th Cross Lavelle Road **When:** Ongoing till March 31; 10 am-6 pm



# 2 new EV charging points for Bengaluru

Among 11 locations across state, Bescom picks RTO at HSR Layout to set up chargers

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**L**everaging more electric vehicle infrastructure for users of the greener mode of commute, Bangalore Electric Supply Company Ltd (BESCOM) has planned an estimated 22 chargers across regional transport offices in the state. Two of those chargers would be located in Bengaluru RTO in HSR Layout.

This comes as good news for EV users, as they are looking for the charging infrastructure to be bolstered. The nodal agency planned the installation of chargers at 11 locations across the state. Bengaluru will also get two chargers-- CC 60Kw and AC001 10 KW at the HSR Layout RTO.

A tender has been floated for providing EV charging stations at identified RTO premises across the state at Rs 3.63 crore. Out of this, Rs 2,84,31,199.97 would be spent for electrical infrastructure and Rs 78,75,709 towards setting up civil works. BESCOM will be spending Rs 42,15,581 towards setting up the EV charging stations in HSR Layout RTO. BESCOM is pursuing this project with funds provided by the transport department.

As per the plan, other locations have been identified in the districts of Mysuru, Hassan, Mangaluru, Chikkamagaluru, Shivamogga, Hubballi, Belagavi, Vijayapura, Davanagere, Tumak-



A tender has been floated for providing EV charging stations at identified RTO premises across the state at Rs 3.63 crore; of this Rs 42,15,581 will be put in for chargers at HSR Layout RTO

**Selected agency will have to complete all work such as location survey, planning, designing, engineering, manufacturing, testing, inspection**

uru and Bengaluru.

As per the Karnataka Electric Vehicle and Energy Storage Policy 2017 (Government Order of 2017), the government of Karnataka had envisaged a compelling

vision of making Bengaluru the electric vehicle capital of India besides attracting investment to the tune of Rs 31,000 crore and creating 55,000 new jobs by 2022.

The selected agency will have to complete all works for the installation of EV chargers such as location survey, planning, designing, engineering, manufacturing, testing, inspection, packing, supply, transportation, insurance, installation, commissioning and warranty of EV charging stations along with associated electrical and arranging

power supply works, civil works for charging stations and maintenance of EV charging stations.

The measure is expected to address the range anxiety and provide an EV charging facility at the subsidised rate finalised by BESCOM.

Currently, BESCOM has 700 charging stations and 1537 chargers. 320 chargers with 195 charging stations established under the ESCOM fund, 112 chargers and 14 stations installed by other government agencies, and 491 charging stations with 1105 chargers by private companies.

## Menstrual cups, cloth pads distributed in Ragigudda slum

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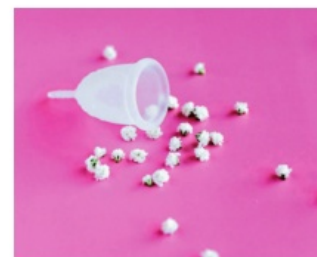
TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**I**n an initiative toward promoting sustainable menstruation practices, Ploggers Army conducted its 24th drive, marking the first of the year, at a slum near Ragigudda in JP Nagar. Approximately 50-60 women and girls participated in the session, where the organisation addressed Sustainable Menstruation (SM), debunked prevalent myths, and provided the women with menstrual cups and pads.

Sustainable menstruation is of importance due to its far-reaching implications for both individuals and the environment. It creates environmental impact, as the sanitary items, often made out of non-biodegradable materials,

result in extensive landfill waste. Sustainable alternatives like menstrual cups and cloth pads reduce this environmental burden, as they are reusable and have a substantially lower ecological footprint. What sets this initiative apart is the involvement of Ananya, a student from Whitefield, who, at the age of 13-16 years, took charge of the session with the support of her mother. The enthusiasm displayed by young individuals like Ananya signal a positive shift, breaking societal stereotypes and encouraging the younger generation to spearhead initiatives promoting menstrual health.

Since 2021, Ploggers Army has reached various neighbourhoods, including Yeshwanthpur, Jayanagar 4th T block, Jayanagar 7th block, JP Nagar 2nd phase, 6th phase, Koramangala, Neel-



sandra, KSRTC Layout, Kothanur, Bellandur, and more. Over this period, the organisation has distributed approximately 400 menstrual cups and close to 2,000 cloth pads, making significant strides in promoting sustainable menstrual hygiene.

Speaking on the challenges faced in slum areas, Raj from Ploggers Army said, "There is lack of awareness regarding sustainable menstruation, and hence there is a need for education in

**Sustainable period products are vital as sanitary items, often made of non-biodegradable materials, result in lots of landfill waste**

these communities. Misconceptions persist, particularly regarding the perceived costliness and hygiene of cloth pads. Many women remain unaware that, in the long run, cloth pads and menstrual cups prove to be more cost-effective, eco-friendly alternatives." While there has been a positive response and acceptance of cloth pads, Raj emphasised on the need for increased awareness regarding menstrual cups. "As long as they don't use any harmful disposables, it's absolutely fine," he stressed.



## Everything you need to know about flexi loan or dropline overdraft

It is not uncommon to get a call from lending institutions offering a flexi loan, also known as dropline overdraft facility. However, not many are aware how this loan works and whether it is a better option than the conventional overdraft facility or a personal loan. We tell you how it works and whether you should go for such a loan when you have other options.

### What is a dropline overdraft and how does it work?

As the name suggests, it is an overdraft facility in which the total credit limit offered at the beginning comes down gradually and it finally becomes zero at the end of the specified tenure.

"In the dropline facility, the principal amount diminishes periodically, varying from month to month, quarter to quarter, semi-annually or annually, contingent upon the financial institution's policies," says Adhil Shetty, CEO, Bankbazaar.com.

For instance, if you take a



dropline overdraft facility with an initial limit of Rs 6 lakh for 3 years with annual dropline, you will be able to withdraw up to Rs 6 lakh any time or many times before the year ends. However, the limit will be reduced to Rs 4 lakh after the first year; to Rs 2 lakh after 2 years; and it will eventually come down to zero after 3 years.

A combination of conventional overdraft and dropline overdraft is offered in the form of a hybrid product. "There's also a hybrid flexi loan option

where, for the initial two years, customers need to pay only interest. After 24 months, the loan converts into a dropline flexi for the remaining tenure. The costs remain the same for both dropline and normal flexi loans," says Rishi Mehra, CEO of Wishfin.com.

### How does a flexi loan differ from a personal loan and a normal overdraft facility?

A personal loan typically comes in the form of a term loan with EMI as repayment

option. "A personal loan is a lump-sum loan disbursed by a bank or financial institution for a specific purpose. The borrower receives the entire loan amount upfront and repays it in installments," says Shetty.

An overdraft facility gives the flexibility to withdraw the money as and when you wish and repay it anytime as per your convenience. "Overdraft facility is a revolving credit facility linked to a bank account.

The account holder can withdraw more money than the available balance, up to a pre-approved limit," says Shetty. The interest is charged only on the outstanding amount that you have taken out and not on the total sanctioned limit.

However, the sanctioned limit remains unchanged till the end of the tenure," says Mehra.

While the repayment flexibility and interest charging mechanism remains the same with flexi loan or dropline overdraft facility, the limit

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does not remain constant during the tenure. The limit reduction mechanism may vary from lender to lender as many lenders offer annual reduction.

### Charges for a dropline overdraft facility

There is a cost associated with flexibility of the repayment offered by a normal overdraft facility where you have to typically pay an annual maintenance charge.

"Unlike some financial products, there is no annual maintenance charge (AMC) associated with dropline

overdraft. Monthly interest is charged on the outstanding balance. However, it may vary depending on the institutions and terms and conditions of the borrowing," says Shetty.

The interest rate and the charges that you will be offered will depend on many factors. "The cost may vary from one financial institution to another depending on the credit score and profile of the borrower and the amount he needs. Your creditworthiness is what is crucial in this case," says Shetty.

ET Online

**City** | BangaloreMirror

## Let there be light, but don't make it blinding

LED headlights far exceeding permissible limits of brightness turning out to be traffic hazard

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Citizens have been complaining that several vehicle drivers are using illegal LEDs sold on shopping portals or car accessories shops. The LED lights are becoming a major traffic menace, they said.

As per original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) via Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI), the Motor Vehicles Act states that the maximum permissible headlights are up to 55/60W - 55W for low beams and 60W for high beams. Low beams are used in city limits, and high beams on highways if there are no street lights or there is low visibility.

"Illegal LEDs of over 100W-160W are being sold online on different

websites and in all car accessories shops. Anything above 60W LED white lights can have a direct impact on the retina. Our eyes are accustomed to a certain aperture in low light at night, and when suddenly someone flashes such high-intensity beams over 120W, it's more of a shock followed by temporary blindness. Temporary blindness makes us lose concentration on steering, and most fatal accidents occur during dark hours," said a citizen, Dave.

Another citizen added that knowingly and even unknowingly, drivers and riders inside the city and on highways flash the illegal white LEDs above permissible limits either from the front or rear.

"I have seen high beam lights after dark inside the city and on highways, and even in zones that are well lit. While going on Electronic City Expressway, these are dangerous and cause accidents at night, so



we have stopped driving or riding on this elevated flyover at night. There are back-to-back accidents and speeding here at night," he said.

Citizens say all such violations have been reported via emails to all traffic police departments in Bengaluru and tweets with dash camera footage for strict actions against all violators.

"This menace needs strict regulations also from the automobile regulators plus the police department and a notice to online websites and local accessories shops in JC Road and others. Anyone misusing and blocking the vision of drivers or riders should be penalized with hefty fines," added a commuter.

## Drop your plastic: Flower vendors fined over Rs 1 lakh

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 @timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

In a move to combat environmental degradation, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) cracked down on vendors violating plastic and segregation bans during Women's Day celebrations. Between March 7 and March 9, a staggering Rs 1,06,100 were collected as fines imposed on vendors across the city, sending a strong message against the use of plastic in flower packaging.

The highest number of fines was recorded in the South Zone, where 111 cases incurred penalties totaling Rs 27,900. Following closely was the West Zone, with 88 cases and fines amounting to Rs 25,200, and the East Zone, where 74 cases resulted in fines of Rs 21,900.

The violations mainly revolved around the use of plastic, foil, and non-woven polypropylene (NWPP) sheets to wrap bouquets.

The issue of florists violating the plastic and segregation bans has long been a concern, with customers often choosing environmentally harmful options. To address this, Beautiful Bharat, a volunteer group dedicated to flagging environmental issues, has

### TOP VIOLATORS

| Zone     | Cases | Amount    |
|----------|-------|-----------|
| EAST     | 74    | Rs 21,900 |
| WEST     | 88    | Rs 25,200 |
| SOUTH    | 111   | Rs 27,900 |
| RR NAGAR | 29    | Rs 12,700 |
| B'HALLI  | 25    | Rs 13,000 |

been running an extensive awareness campaign, emphasising on the banned status of plastic, foil, and NWPP sheets around bouquets.

Through the India Florist Association, Beautiful Bharat is leveraging its network to disseminate this crucial information among florists. The BBMP marshals have been instrumental in enforcing the ban, making it clear that prohibited items will not be tolerated. Confiscated items, weighing a substantial amount, have been responsibly deposited at Dry Waste Collection Centres for recycling.

Beautiful Bharat is also proposing the introduction of bouquet tags with disposal instructions on the reverse. The aim is to encourage proper segregated disposal, reducing the impact of mixed waste on landfills and mitigating environmental harm caused by methane emissions.

# Bike taxi ban okay, but auto drivers have other demands

Indiscriminate issue of permits leading to unhealthy competition, claim drivers; union urges government to remember and implement its special package promise

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**A**uto rickshaw drivers have welcomed the state government's decision to ban electric bike taxi services which they considered as a threat to their livelihood. However, there is a list of concerns that they plan to raise with the government, which includes indiscriminate issuing of permits for new auto rickshaws. Many auto drivers said that it has become tough for them to earn money due to unhealthy competition. They demand that the government take measures to scrap old auto rickshaws by providing a loan facility for the owners to buy new vehicles.

"We appreciate the state government for banning electric bike taxi services in the state. The state government had issued licences to operate electric bike taxis without taking auto rickshaw drivers into confidence. It affected many auto rickshaw drivers," said Adarsha Auto and Cab Drivers' Association general secretary C Sampath.

It may be recalled that the then Leader of Opposition Siddaramaiah demanded that the state government announce a special package for unorganised sector workers including auto rickshaw drivers in April 2020. Criticising the Chief Minister for not honouring his commitment of announcing the special package, CN Srinivas of Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union, affiliated to



Auto drivers are demanding that the government take measures to scrap old auto rickshaws by providing a loan facility for the owners to buy new vehicles

**"I have been advising drivers not to demand extra fare from passengers. Such auto drivers have to change their attitude"**

— Rudramurthy, auto drivers' union

CITU, said the need of the hour is to have a welfare board for auto rickshaw drivers.

"We are planning to meet Chief Minister Siddaramaiah shortly to appeal and convince him about the importance of establishing a welfare board for auto rickshaw drivers. We will also explain to the Chief Minister how permits being issued for new auto rickshaws are affecting all

drivers. There are many auto rickshaws operating in the city without valid permits," said Srinivas.

He said the establishment of a welfare board would be a great help. "Auto rickshaw drivers or owners of autos can avail of loans for repair or replacing the old auto rickshaws," he said.

Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union general secretary Rudramurthy

blamed greedy auto rickshaw drivers for the popularity of electric bike taxi services in the city. "The ban order issued by the transport department is not clear and is confusing. Some people who own white board electric bike taxis are still operating in the city. It is leading to law and order problems," said Rudramurthy.

He also criticised some auto rickshaw drivers exploiting hapless passengers by demanding more money. "I have been advising many drivers not to demand extra fare from the passengers. Such auto rickshaw drivers have to change their attitude towards passengers," he said.

## BBMP to expand Kidwai Hospital parking

Multi-level parking to accommodate additional vehicles; Kidwai Institute set to benefit with 4 new floors

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

**A**iding the premier cancer institute in the city, Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is planning to add four more floors to the ongoing construction of the multi-level parking (MLP) structure at Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology. After being proposed in 2017, the completed portion of the facility will be opened in a week.

Seeing the parking problems at Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology, BBMP devised a plan for a six-storey multi-level parking struc-



ture for hospital visitors. With more visitors and less parking space available, Kidwai officials had requested BBMP to construct an MLP. In the first phase, ground plus two floors with an estimated capacity of 150 four-wheelers and some designated space for two-wheelers. In the second phase, BBMP is planning the construction of four more floors, which will be reserved for four-wheelers. This would provide space for another 300 four-wheelers, tally-

ing up the total vehicle capacity to 450 vehicles. BBMP has called tenders for the construction of an additional 04 Floors above the ongoing construction of multi-level car parking at Kidwai Institute at the cost of Rs 7.95 crore. The whole project was estimated to add up to Rs 15 crore.

"Upon the request of Kidwai doctors, we constructed an MLP using BBMP grants for the hospital's use alone. We have seen the issues they face with parking vehicles on the

premises. In phase 1, we constructed a ground plus 2 floors and now we are planning to construct another 4 floors. This would provide sufficient parking space for the patients coming to Kidwai," said a BBMP official.

As the proposal to construct four more floors takes afoot, BBMP is planning to open the completed portions. "Leaving a little bit of space for construction activities, we will open the completed portion to the public for use within a week," he added.

After completion, the building will be handed over to Kidwai and will be managed and operated by Kidwai staff. Currently, BBMP is not in discussions about a revenue-sharing model for the facility.

Meanwhile, the Rs 80 crore MLP at Freedom Park has been waiting to be opened to the public by BBMP. The facility has the capacity to hold 450 two-wheelers and 550 four-wheelers. But having struggled to finalise an agency for operating the facility, BBMP agreed to operate it. But still, the facility is yet to be opened to the public.

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### Path loss

CN Palya



A footpath is completely encroached upon in CN Palya, Yeshwanthpur constituency, by vendors. As the road sees busy traffic, it puts pedestrians in the way of danger.

### Pit falls

Horamavu



There is a back-breaking, accident-causing pot-holed road at Divya Unnathi Circle, Horamavu Agara. Commuters find it too difficult to take this road due to the patchy peeling off road work.

### Eating block

Jayanagar



An eatery has encroached upon the pavement at Jayanagar 4th Block. Pedestrians are forced onto the road to share space with vehicles. The police station is just 300 metres from here.



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for poll  
recce

Officers of  
CISF during a  
route march  
at Russell  
market ahead  
of Lok Sabha  
elections, at  
Shivajinagar,  
on Sunday

# Is it a wrap for cotton candy, gobhi manchurian?

Talk on banning food items that contain harmful artificial chemicals puts question-mark on fate of Bengaluru's favourite food items

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**C**ould your beloved cotton candy and gobhi Manchurian (an Indo-Chinese preparation with cauliflower) soon face a ban in Karnataka? The suspense will unravel on Monday. Following the lead from neighbouring states, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has procured samples of cotton candy and gobhi manchurian. According to sources, these samples were found to contain artificial chemicals harmful to health.

A report detailing these findings has been submitted to the government. Rhodamine B and Sunset Yellow FCF have been identified in cotton candy samples, while the gobhi manchurian samples also tested positive for artificial chemicals. When asked to comment on this, Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, said, "I have scheduled a press conference for Monday where I will disclose further details."

Meanwhile, there is a growing demand to ban kabab as well, as certain establishments reportedly use artificial colours and hazardous chemicals in their preparation. Allegedly, artificial colours are also used in dishes like pulav, green peas masala, masala puri, and pani puri, with Malachite green reportedly used in peas.

An official said, "There has been a demand for a ban as it will create awareness among those who manufacture the candy, among vendors, and customers. We want to make sure people know that coloured candy may taste delicious but contains harmful chemicals that cause health hazards. Once adequate awareness is created, food safety offi-



Harmful chemicals were identified in cotton candy samples

cials will ensure only colour-free cotton candy is sold."

The move comes following Tamil Nadu banning the sale of cotton candy after food safety officials confirmed that it contained the cancer-causing chemical Rhodamine-B, a dye commonly used in the textile industry.

Before Tamil Nadu, Puducherry had banned candies after identifying the same chemical compound. Both in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, food officers have been directed to keep a check on all food products that have added colour.

Gobhi manchurian, the cheap-but-tasty starter, that can work wonders for any tired palate, has been banned in Mapusa, a town in North Goa, recently. The town's municipal council had passed the order after a councillor alleged that the fiery red dish, a favourite in Goa's village fairs, was made using synthetic colours, sauces of dubious quality, and, it was also alleged, reetha powder, a detergent.

Gobhi manchurian is a very popular fast food in Bengaluru as well. Usually, soya sauce is used to prepare this dish. But for street vendors, this

sauce is relatively costly, which is why they use an inexpensive red colour. That makes the dish unhealthy. This dish is a close cousin of the chicken manchurian that is reported to have been invented in the 1970s by Nelson Wang, the well-known Chinese chef from Mumbai, while he was working at the Cricket Club of India. It gets its name and unique taste from the red Manchurian sauce used to make it. While it gained popularity among many who relished gobhi manchurian, the true concern lies with its colouring.

## Stop use of toxic colours

However, hoteliers caution the government against a blanket ban. A hotelier who didn't want to be named said, "There should be adequate regulations to ensure that the quality of the dish is not compromised, and people are still able to enjoy it. Chinese food doesn't have such dark colours. And if one still wants to use colours, there are options like beetroot, turmeric, that can add colour and still be healthy. Instead of banning, the government should ensure that chefs don't use harmful colours."

## Cubbon Park annex protest gets canine power

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**D**ogs joined in on the fourth protest against the proposed construction of a 10-storey annex for the Karnataka High Court within the Cubbon Park on Sunday. Protestors have been consistently holding demonstrations every Sunday in order to urge the government to put forth a notification rescinding its order.

"The Cubbon Park Walkers' Association (CPWA) will hold a unique protest with their pet dogs against the construction of a 10-storey building as an annexe to the High Court, within the Cubbon Park premises. Though CPWA has held three protests so far, the government has not issued any notification rescinding its order on the construction. Cubbon Park is one of the last lung spaces in Bengaluru which has to be preserved for posterity," the walkers association said in a statement.

CPWA President S Umesh was



Cubbon Park Walkers' Association members and pets at the protest

taken into custody by the police during their second protest. "This only shows that the government is determined to go ahead with the construction ignoring public sentiment. We strongly condemn this high-handedness and attack on our democratic right to peacefully protest. CPWA along with environmentalists will intensify the protest in the coming days," the association had then said in a statement. The said construction, if it were to take place, would involve razing down of the old Election Commission (EC) building where the new building will be constructed, situated between the Press Club and the old KGIB building.

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# It's locals vs officials at tiger reserve

**Forest dept claims fire incidents at BRT have been deliberate acts by those who are in illegal possession of forest land**

Nearly 80 acres of forest land at BRT Tiger Reserve (file photo) consumed in two fire incidents

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**A** battle of sorts is on between the Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) and 'locals' at BRT Tiger Reserve. The outcome is that the reserve witnessed its second major fire incident of this season on Friday evening, apart from multiple small incidents - all man-made, according to KFD officials.

The repeated and deliberate act of setting forest land on fire so far has destroyed nearly 80 acres of forest land in BRT in the two major incidents that took place within a week, they said.

Wildlife conservationists say they fear more such incidents are in store as villagers around the reserve do it out of vengeance.

"The pattern of these incidents shows that these are being put down by locals as they are upset with foresters. We expect more such incidents over the coming days. In this battle between the

**“When the department has refused to give in to the pressure (from the illegal grantees), they have resorted to setting forest areas on fire**

—Deepa Contractor, BRT Tiger Reserve

forest department and villagers, wildlife is suffering the most," said Joseph Hoover, founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust.

KFD officials say these incidents are sabotage and an act of revenge by those who are in illegal possession of forest land (land granted after 1980, the year of enactment of the Forest (Conservation) Act).

There has been an ongoing Lokayukta case since 2016 to clear the dispute over land ownership and to establish a forest area in BR Hills. In 2019, a joint survey was conducted by the Forest Department in association with the Revenue Department. The case was to be presented in 2020, however, it got delayed as the pandemic struck.

"We are now finalising the survey. The 'wrongly' classified RFs

are lands released post-independence for poor people, where the grants of forest land are legal and valid and where grantees are in possession are being considered. All others (forest land given away in 1980) are to be canceled. These illegal grantees are well-connected people who are trying to change the map. When the department has refused to give in to the pressure, they have resorted to setting forest areas on fire. Lokayukta's most recent response in February made it clear that we will be canceling these grants. These incidents have started since February in forest ranges where these grants exist," said BRT Tiger Reserve DCF and Director Deepa J Contractor.

According to Contractor, while 59 acres were impacted in the fire incident early this week, nearly 20 acres have been damaged due to Friday's fire incident.

## Trust deficit

However, wildlife conservationists underline the lack of coordination and trust between KFD officials and villagers, a major reason leading to fire incidents.

"Unless there is an interaction between forest officials and the local community, these incidents will continue. The department should focus on winning people's confidence in the area. Minimal outreach activities are happening on ground," said a conservationist. Officials say this allegation is false.

"Since January this year, we have conducted nearly 40 outreach programmes, all with the help of local performers. BRT Tiger Reserve has 185 fire watchers and they are from tribal settlements inside the reserve. In a one-of-a-kind initiative, we have also provided uniforms, first aid kits, water cans, and backpacks to our forest watchers. Higher officials of BRT also attended the recent Shivaratri pooja organised by the tribal community," said Contractor.

## Time to pack off package system, say contractors

**I** Bangalore Mirror Bureau  
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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

**T**he Karnataka State Contractors Association (KSCA) has demanded that the package system be stopped. This system that has put multiple works under one umbrella has resulted in corruption, the contractors claim. They asked Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to take necessary steps to do away with this system.

In a letter to the CM, they added that instead of calling a separate tender for each work, the secret of this package system is to combine many works and declare them as a package to facilitate a few contractors. Thus the local contractor has to struggle even to get a tender worth a few lakhs of rupees. Calling for separate tenders for each work will help local and state contractors and help maintain quality, they said.

"Several states, including Tamil Nadu, have amended the law in the legislature to make the works available only to local contractors, and we request that the same model be followed in the state as well. We request that an estimated list of the amount of ongoing and upcoming works be prepared. If tenders are invited for works based on the availability of funds, the pressure on the government and contractors will be reduced. Exemption under Karnataka Transparency Rules - 2000 (KTP-2000) 4G as the government hands over the works directly to the contractors will give rise to corruption. It is very common for them to follow left-handers and assign the work to contractors who are close to them. Due to this, the qualified contractor suffers injustice along with quality deterioration. If all types of works are allocated through separate tenders, justice will be provided..." said the letter.

They added that more than Rs 16,000 crore has to be released to the contractors from water resources, public works, rural development, BBMP and other departments. "There are still situations where general contractors suffer losses. Several contractors have also committed suicide. Therefore, we want the government to release the outstanding amount on the basis of time limit and seniority without yielding to any pressure or influence," members of the association added.

## NOTES FROM THE FIELD



### MLA takes the wheel

Political leaders seldom miss an opportunity for grand gestures, whether it's cutting ribbons or inaugurating events. Gubbi MLA SR Sinivas took this to a new level during a bus

service inauguration, seizing the driver's seat and taking the wheel, with Home Minister G Parameshwara among the passengers. This act raised questions about the leader's qualifications to operate heavy vehicles, sparking debate over accountability and privilege in governance.

### Credit amidst scarcity

In the relentless pursuit of publicity, politicians employ various tactics, from plastering their photos on bus stands to public toilets, claiming credit for sanctioned projects. Now, a fresh battle has emerged on the canvas of water tankers stationed across the city, adorned with images of local MLAs and party leaders. However, the irony lies in the fact that many of these tankers remain empty, leaving citizens frustrated with the lack of water despite the boasts.

### Bowl initiative

Actor Darshan, renowned for his affection for animals and birds, imparted invaluable



advice during a recent Shivaratri event where he was the chief guest. Addressing the audience, he drew attention to the severe water scarcity affecting both people and wildlife. Amidst the drying of water sources, he urged everyone to consider the plight of animals and birds struggling to find water. His solution was simple: Place a bowl of water outside their homes to ensure that thirsty creatures are not left wanting.

### Relief for journos?

In a recent turn of events, the Supreme Court dismissed the 2018 money laundering case against Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar. Reflecting on his ordeal, Shivakumar empathised with journalists who covered his arrest, acknowledging the sleepless nights they spent outside the jail and courtroom. Recalling his own 54 days in jail and numerous interrogations at the ED office, he expressed relief at the court's decision, highlighting the shared journey of endurance.

### Nostalgia

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah took a trip down memory lane, reminiscing about his humble beginnings during his school days. Born before independence, he recalled the early lessons in Kannada literacy from his teacher Nanje Gowda. Sharing anecdotes of his schooling journey, from being directly admitted to Class V to attending a modest school lacking modern amenities, he contrasted his education with the privileges enjoyed by children today.

—Sridhar Vivan

# Deepfakes can help sway opinion, experts caution

Elections are to be held in more than 50 countries, including India, this year; this time there is new threat that can create misinformation and manipulate people

**A**s billions of people will vote in elections around the world this year, growing threats from artificial intelligence (AI) technology such as deepfake videos and voice synching can be used to help influence public opinion, discredit people or politicians, experts said on Sunday.

This year, elections will be held in more than 50 countries around the world, including India. "Deepfakes pose a significant threat to democracy, as they are frequently weaponised to manipulate opinions, influence stock prices, and create misinformation," Harish Kumar GS, Head of Sales, India and SAARC, Check Point Software Technologies, told IANS.

"These deepfake videos and voice synching can be used to help

sway public opinion, discredit individuals or politicians, especially during salient timing such as elections, disrupting the political party and destroying the politician's image and reputation and disturbing the democratic system," he added. The proliferation of deepfake content surged in late 2017, with over 7,900 videos online. By early 2019,

**“These deepfake videos and voice synching can be used to discredit politicians, or other individuals especially during salient timing such as polls** — Harish Kumar, expert

this number nearly doubled to 14,678, and the trend continues to escalate, according to experts. Recently, deepfake videos of former US President Bill Clinton and current President Joe Biden were fabricated and circulated to confuse citizens during the presidential elections. Similarly, a deepfake video of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky urging soldiers to surrender in their fight against Russia was shared on social media, creating panic and confusion.

## India's directives

The Indian government has issued directives to social media platforms such as X and Meta (formerly Facebook), urging them to regulate the proliferation of AI-generated

deepfake content. Ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) has issued an advisory to such platforms to remove AI-generated deepfakes from their platforms. To combat these threats, experts said that organisations must defend themselves against deepfake attacks. "As AI continues to advance, it becomes imperative to manage its dual role by harnessing its capabilities to combat deepfake threats while mitigating the risks associated with potential misuse," said Vishal Salvi, CEO of Quick Heal Technologies.

He also mentioned that despite the numerous potential drawbacks, AI is anticipated to advance cybersecurity and aid organisations in establishing more robust security measures.

According to experts, effective detection of deepfake content requires meticulous examination of various aspects of the media.

## How to screen such content

To detect such content, they suggested to begin by scrutinising facial expressions and movements for inconsistencies, such as irregular blinking patterns or discrepancies between audio and visual cues.

Pay attention to lip-sync errors and evaluate lighting conditions and shadows for anomalies that could reveal manipulation. Be vigilant of unusual backgrounds and listen for audio irregularities.

Additionally, consider utilising deepfake detection tools and software applications available online to further scrutinise media for potential manipulation. — IANS

## BJP distances itself from Hegde's remarks on Constitution

**T**he BJP's Karnataka unit on Sunday distanced itself from MP Anant Kumar Hegde's remarks on amending the Constitution, calling it "personal views," and said that it will seek an explanation from him. The party said it reaffirms its unwavering commitment to uphold the Constitution, and Hegde's remarks do not reflect its stance.

"MP Shri Anant Kumar Hegde's remarks on the Constitution are his personal views and do not reflect the party's stance. BJP reaffirms our unwavering commitment to uphold the nation's Constitution and will ask for an explanation from Shri Hegde regarding his comments," BJP Karnataka posted on 'X'.

Hegde has said it is necessary for the party to gain two-thirds majority in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha and also come to power in more than 20 States to amend the Constitution aimed at setting right alleged distortions and unnecessary additions to it by the Congress.

The six-time Lok Sabha member from Karnataka said the NDA winning more than 400 seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha polls will eventually help in mustering a similar majority in the Upper House and also bagging two-third of states. "If the Constitution has to be amended -- the Congress which fundamentally distorted the Constitution by forcefully filling unnecessary things in it, especially by bringing in laws that were aimed at suppressing the Hindu society -- if all of this has to be changed it is not possible with this (current) majority," he said addressing a gathering in Uttara Kannada.

Reacting to Hegde's statement, Deputy Chief Minister and state Congress chief DK Shivakumar said this shows that BJP is anti-Constitution.

— IANS



The proliferation of deepfake content surged in late 2017, with over 7,900 videos online. By early 2019, this number nearly doubled to 14,678, and the trend continues to escalate

# How focused are elected representatives on children's issues

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

did not bother to raise any query. BJP members raised 598 queries of which 36 pertained to children's welfare. Congress members raised 352 queries and among them 18 were child-centric and JD(S) that has only eight members managed to raise 182 queries but only four were child-centric.

Child rights activists urged the elected representatives to raise more queries related to children's welfare during the legislature sessions to draw the government's attention. "I expect elected representatives to be proactive when it comes to raising queries related to children's problems," said Rao of Child Rights Trust.

Demanding medical facilities for children at taluk hospitals, Lakshmi prasanna HK, a member of RTE Task Force and a member of



Child Welfare Committee said the authorities have to take measures to ensure medical facilities for children at taluk hospitals.

"The problem with the elected representatives is that they consider

children as the citizens of tomorrow and their focus is only those who exercise their franchise. Most of the children-related queries raised by the elected representatives during the budget session are related to POCSO

## Medicine for SSLC exam fever

Child Rights Trust's Rao has written a letter to minister for primary and secondary education Madhu Bangarappa emphasising on the need to create a conducive atmosphere at SSLC examination centres across the state. "The school administrations must make arrangements for counselling SSLC students to prevent fear and depression among them. Many students have to write SSLC examinations at schools that are not familiar to them. Allowing the SSLC students to visit the

examination centres one day before the exams begin would be a great help to them," Rao said.

The other suggestions are: Teachers have to welcome SSLC students with a smile. Toilets must be clean and drinking water facilities must be made at every examination centre. Priority should be given for counselling a student found copying instead of punishment. Do not announce or publicise the name of the student who is found or caught copying.

and foeticide highlighted by the media. The elected representatives are not aware of the children's problems because they do not have voting rights," said Lakshmi prasanna.

Manju K, a member of the Karnataka State Commission for

Protection of Child Rights, said that it is the responsibility of the elected representatives to raise the issues related to children's welfare. "It is the duty of the elected representatives to work for the welfare of people, including children," Manju said.

# 3 states join hands for forest protection

**K'taka, Kerala, TN officials meet, decide to work towards identification, expansion of wildlife habitats**

| Sridhar.Vivan  
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TWEETS @sridharVMIRROR

**W**ith Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala sharing forest borders, now the three states have joined hands to collaborate to prevent wildlife conflict, poaching, and to conserve forest and wildlife. A joint meeting of the three states held on Sunday decided to work for the identification and expansion of wildlife habitats, along with a steadfast commitment to forest conservation despite the encroachment of residential areas.

Karnataka's forest Minister Eshwar Khandre said, "This is a genuine commitment to collaborate across borders in order to decrease human-animal

conflicts.

This commitment was further reinforced by strategic coordination, which facilitated seamless collaboration, structured information sharing, and joint efforts against the challenges posed by human-wildlife conflicts. A resource exchange programme has been proposed, signifying coordinated efforts to exchange critical resources, expertise, and knowledge among the participating states. Moreover, the meeting stressed on the importance of estimating wildlife numbers and conducting joint operations, enabling informed decision-making and coordinated actions.

Additionally, there was a proposal to establish an advisory council comprising wildlife conservation experts, aimed at providing valuable insights to enhance conflict management strategies. The meeting also highlighted the necessity for regular review and adaptation of governance practices to ensure sustainable excellence and to adapt to evolving responsibilities.

Through these collaborative initiatives, we envisioned a future where humans and wildlife coexist harmoniously, transcending administrative boundaries and leaving behind a



**Wild animals roam freely between forests. Elephants have freely roamed between Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka for centuries, transcending state borders**

legacy of responsible conservation."

AK Saseendran, Minister for Forest and Wildlife, Kerala government said the meeting was not convened at the central government's behest but was the result of the concern and self-effort of the three southern states.

Khandre said, "Wild animals roam freely between forests. Elephants have freely roamed between Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka for centuries, transcending state borders. There

exists an elephant corridor, and tigers also move between forests. Measures to mitigate damage to lives or crops caused by wildlife in any state will soon be implemented.

Late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi prioritized forest and wildlife conservation and enacted relevant acts. Subsequent governments' emphasis on preserving forest and wildlife wealth has led to their preservation and an increase in wild animal numbers. In today's meeting, it was decided to cooperate to conserve forest and wildlife by adopting the best practices of these three southern states."

Officials said Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu excel in forest and wildlife conservation programs, leading to increased wildlife numbers in these states. Khandre stressed the importance of continuing these efforts.

"Cases of wildlife-human conflict rise as residential areas are deforested due to wildlife and population growth. Every being has the right to live, stressing the need for coexistence between forest dwellers and wildlife. We have proposed a joint standard operating procedure (SOP) to manage human-animal conflict."

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**ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಹಾಗೂ ತಾಲೂಕು ಮಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ತರಬೇತಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನ**

**ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಅಂಗೀಕೃತ ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್, ವಿವಿಧ ಕೋರ್ಸುಗಳನ್ನು ನಡೆಸಲು ಸುವರ್ಣಾಕಾಶ**

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## What's ailing Gandhi Bazaar Main Road

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

care of the High Court's specifications too," said M Lokesh, chief engineer, projects, BBMP.

However, no such mock-up structure, as claimed by BBMP, is visible on the road. Residents and traders said the shelter was brought for installation two weeks ago, but the design was not in line with the High Court's specifications.

"As per the court order, no permanent structure can be installed on the pavement. It should not be made of heavy metal, but only very lightweight and easily removable material. However, the mock shelter designed by BBMP was made up of heavy metal, which they were trying to weld into the pavement. We immediately objected and they took it away," said Guru Prasad, a resident of the area and secretary of Heritage Basavanagudi Residents' Welfare Forum.

According to the High Court's order in August last year, BBMP was directed to not put up permanent structures on renovated footpaths as temporary shelters for the street vendors as they may cause obstructions to the business of the traders on the stretch. However, locals said BBMP has anyway gone ahead and constructed a concrete structure on the pavement area.

Traders said the newly designed shelter is also too

big and if installed, would obstruct the view of shops.

"As per the High Court order, the street vendor structure should be temporary and should not harm the vendor and their businesses.

However, the mock-up was covering all the outlets," said a shop owner.

Locals highlighted that the old vendor shades made up of iron frames that were installed by BBMP have not been cleared yet. The civic agency was supposed to remove these structures in October last year. It is taking up a lot of space on the pavement.

Residents pinpointed footpath encroachment by shoppers as they park vehicles due to lack of adequate parking space. Some shops are still using up the footpath area and have refused to clear out despite repeated warnings from the BBMP.

### 'Gandhi Bazaar prone to accidents'

"There have been three deaths on the stretch over the past year after renovation started. The recent accident was a couple of days ago. In one of the accidents, the ambulance that came to pick up the injured was stuck on the road for nearly half an hour. The road has become too narrow and prone to accidents," added Prasad.



## Gadkari unveils highway projects worth Rs 4,000 crore in Karnataka

**U**nion Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for 22 National Highway projects, spanning 268 km and valued at over Rs 4,000 crore in Karnataka's Mysuru on Sunday.

The minister said in a social media post that these include initiatives like the Huliya-KB cross-Chunchanahalli-Nelligere road

aimed to enhance connectivity between Mysuru and North Karnataka.

The Mysuru Ring Road, complete with service roads will alleviate congestion and ensure a smoother flow of traffic.

The 4-lane expansion of Belur-Hassan and Yedegowdanahalli-Bilikere road, coupled with the installation of road overbridges at Hangarahalli and Holenarasipur

bypass, will result in a significant 2-hour reduction in travel time.

The construction of a major bridge over Lakshmanathirtha River seeks to decongest Hunsur Town, echoing the commitment to streamlined urban planning.

Additionally, the development of Srinivasapura and Chintamani bypasses targets congestion reduction in both cities.

The strategic inclusion of major and minor bridges, as well as road-over bridges on railway-level crossings, underscores a concerted effort to facilitate unhindered traffic movement.

-IANS



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

## Understanding intuitive eating and mindful eating for overall wellbeing

**O**ptimum nutrition is essential for good health and wellness. Nutrition comes from the food we eat daily and thus it is important to eat right and show respect for the food we eat and the body to which we provide food. We need a healthy relationship with the food, be present while eating, feel it through all our senses. Vilas Shirhatti, Nutrition Consultant, Naturell India Pvt Ltd. explains more about mindful eating.

Food, apart from providing nutrition, is also about enjoyment, culture, socialising, satisfying cravings and overall wellbeing. Today, consumers are inundated with conflicting diet trends and an abundance of nutritional advice, often leaving them confused. Any benefits of trending diets get reversed once we stop following them. Most importantly, diets are often restrictive, classifying foods as good and bad, affecting normal metabolism, and giving rise to feelings like guilt and anxiety in regards to eating. As such, adopting a non-dieting approach like intuitive eating and mindful eating can be beneficial.

### What Is Intuitive Eating?

Intuitive eating is about trusting your body to make food choices that feel good for you, without judging yourself or the influence of diet culture. Most healthy children natu-



rally eat intuitively; that is, to eat when hungry and stop eating once full. You are the only person who can differentiate between your physical hunger – the biological urge to replenish nutrients which leads to overall wellness vs emotional hunger, which is triggered by emotions such as sadness, loneliness, and boredom. The latter produces cravings for unhealthy food, giving into which leads to guilt and self-hatred and health problems.

While various diets have a focused approach to one aspect of health like weight loss, sugar control etc., the focus of intuitive eating is overall health. For example, if you're not feeling hungry you can skip a meal even though it is your usual mealtime and practise intermittent fasting.

### What Is Mindful Eating?

Often used interchangeably, many intuitive eating and mindful eating concepts overlap. Mindful eating stems from the broader practice of mindfulness, a centuries-old philosophy used in many religions. Mindful eating focuses on the present eating experience with height-

ened awareness beyond the self, and without judgment.

### Best Of Both Worlds

The best approach would be a combination of intuition and knowledge, that is listening to your head and heart in making choices. Here are some strategies for practicing intuitive and mindful eating:

Stay away from diet mentality; trendy diets are not sustainable, and their goal is not overall wellness.

Honour your biological hunger and satisfy it with adequate energy as soon as you get the first signal.

Deal with emotional hunger by distraction, comfort, nurture, socialising and sharing. Food cannot fix emotional problems.

Make peace with food. Do not deprive yourself of food you like as it can trigger cravings. Eat moderately, reduce gradually.

Avoid food policing and unreasonable diet rules. Occasionally, it is ok to have your favourite chocolate.

Listen to your body for fullness signals. Eat slowly, chew the food till it mixes well with saliva, pause in the middle of eating. It takes 20 minutes for the brain to get a signal

from the stomach that it is full. Observe how the body feels after eating.

Focus on food, learn to enjoy food, make eating an enjoyable experience. Feel the food with all your senses. Express gratitude and thank people who prepared food before and after eating. Ensure to not engage in mobiles, screens, reading or other activity while eating.

Respect your body and listen to it; accept your genetic blueprint. Do not be overly critical about the size and shape of your body.

Don't worry about following a rigid exercise routine. Be active, even doing household chores is an exercise. Make sure you feel energised all the time. Going for a walk or indulging in dancing can not only keep your body active but mind as well.

All foods are good as they provide varied nutrition. Eating the same food every day just because you like it, is a bad diet habit. Have maximum biodiversity in the food you eat. Try eating different types of foods and learn to enjoy them. Do not have a negative list.

Listening to your body's cues is essential, but don't confuse innate intuition with your emotions and cravings. With a balanced approach, you can ditch restrictive diets for good and find true freedom in your food choices. Progress matters, not perfection.

—Femina

**Don't worry about following a rigid exercise routine. Be active, even doing household chores is an exercise. Make sure you feel energised all the time**

## MIRRORLIGHTS

### Obesity may be risk factor for stillbirth, study finds

Obesity increases the risk of stillbirth as the pregnancy progresses to full term, according to a study.

The study findings were published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal or CMAJ.

In Canada, the overall risk of stillbirth during pregnancy is roughly 0.4 per cent. "Our findings suggest that an earlier delivery date may help reduce the risk of stillbirth for pregnant people with obesity," said lead author Dr. Naila Ramji, an assistant professor at Dalhousie University and high-risk pregnancy specialist in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Senior author

Dr. Laura Gaudet, an associate professor at Queen's University and high-risk pregnancy specialist, and coauthors at The Ottawa Hospital round out the group.

Although the link between obesity and stillbirth is well-known, there was little research on the association between obesity and stillbirth risk by gestational age, or on the impact of higher classes of obesity.

To address this gap, the researchers analyzed data from the Better Outcomes Registry and Network on 681 178 single-ton births, 1956 of which were stillbirths, in Ontario between 2012



and 2018. After adjusting for other stillbirth risk factors like diabetes and high blood pressure, the researchers found that people with class I obesity (BMI 30–34.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>) had double the risk of stillbirth at 39 weeks' gestation compared to those with normal BMI (18.5–24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>). For those in obesity classes II and III (BMI 35–39.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>)

and BMI 40 kg/m<sup>2</sup> and higher, respectively), stillbirth risk at 36 weeks was 2 to 2.5 times that of people with normal BMI. This risk further increased with gestational age, with a more than fourfold risk at 40 weeks.

"For other medical conditions that increase the risk of stillbirth, there are guidelines that recommend delivery at 38 or 39 weeks. Interestingly, the risk thresholds for those conditions are lower than the risks we found associated with obesity. We worry that implicit biases against people with obesity may be causing the medical community to take the risks they face less seriously," says Dr. Ramji.

— ANI



## All you need to know about...

### Oestrogen helps liver

#### Protects against fatty liver disease

New research from Sweden's Karolinska Institutet demonstrates how oestrogen protects against MASLD, a fatty liver disease that has developed rapidly during the obesity epidemic.

#### Future treatment

The study, published in the journal Molecular Systems Biology, demonstrates how a new medicine under development could become a future treatment for fatty liver disease and liver cancer.

#### What is fatty liver

The global obesity epidemic has resulted in a dramatic increase in fatty liver, a disease in which fat that does not fit into fat cells is stored in liver cells instead. Since last year, fatty liver due to obesity (and not excessive alcohol consumption) is known as MASLD (metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease). According to previous research, as many as one in three adults are affected by some degree of MASLD, which in the worst cases can develop into cirrhosis and liver cancer.

#### Natural protection for women

Women are protected until menopause. However, the disease is very unevenly distributed between the sexes, with a large majority of affected individuals being men.

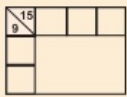
"Women have a natural protection until menopause due to the female sex hormone oestrogen," explains Claudia Kutter, senior researcher at the Department of Microbiology, Tumor and Cell Biology, Karolinska Institutet who led the study.

#### Explaining the mechanism behind effect

Although women's protection has been known for some time, the mechanism behind the protective effect has been less clear. Now Claudia Kutter's research team may have found the answer. **ANI**

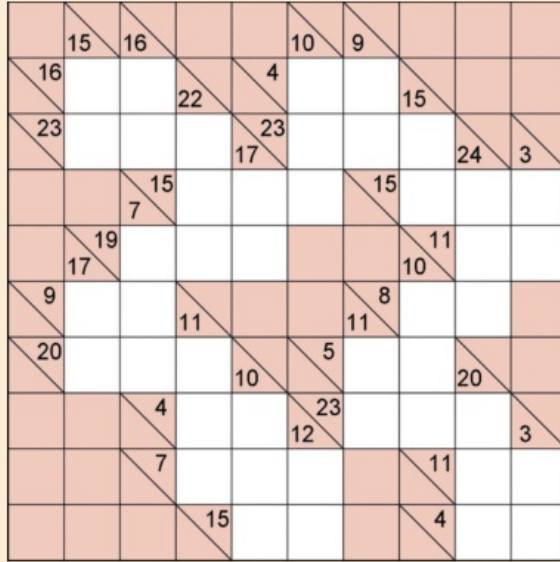
## Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

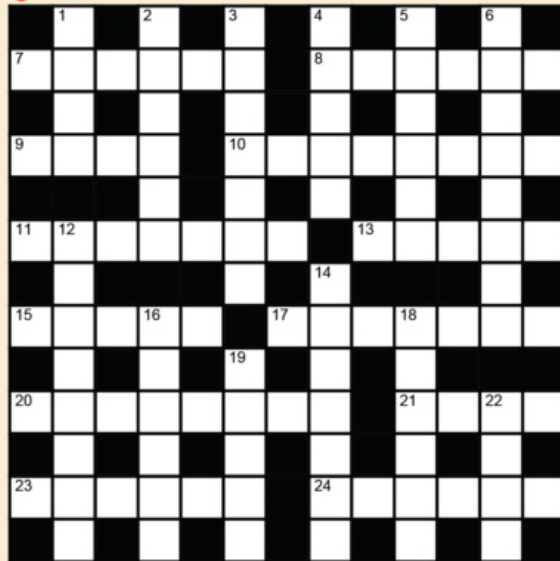


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



## Quick



### ACROSS

- 7 Soldier's trench (6)
- 8 Somewhat ill (6)
- 9 In addition to (4)
- 10 Complied (6,2)
- 11 \_\_\_ the cat : facing danger in common interest? (7)
- 13 Moral values (5)
- 15 Monetary unit of Kuwait (5)
- 17 Domestic waste (7)
- 20 Horse that's 12 months old (8)
- 21 Japanese wrestling (4)
- 23 Initial tries, marauding expeditions (6)
- 24 Far - \_\_\_ : prudent? (6)

### DOWN

- 1 Ship's body (4)
- 2 Tiny bit of food (6)
- 3 Exerts to a great extent (7)
- 4 Of the eye (5)
- 5 Truthful (6)
- 6 Giving away secret by indiscreet talk (8)
- 12 A badge, or characteristic device (8)
- 14 One of Malleshwaram's main streets (7)
- 16 A pilot or an aviator (6)
- 18 \_\_\_ over : dominated over or subjugated? (6)
- 19 Wash out in water (5)
- 22 Horse's hair (4)

## Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: T EQUALS U  
 NFSS LATZ AHPJPAJB LATZ  
 NZQV, FJV LAT GPSS NCFJDQ  
 XCQW QUQZL GQQR.



## Linemaro

No wonder the sky is grey today; all the blue is in your eyes



## Mindchow

Prayer is the key of the morning and the bolt of the evening



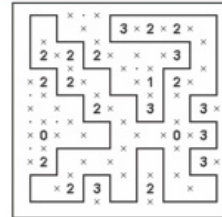
## Joke of the day

They say milk gives you strength. Drink 10 glasses of milk and try to move a wall. You can't. Drink 10 shots of vodka and it moves by itself

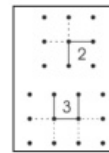
## Loop

### Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



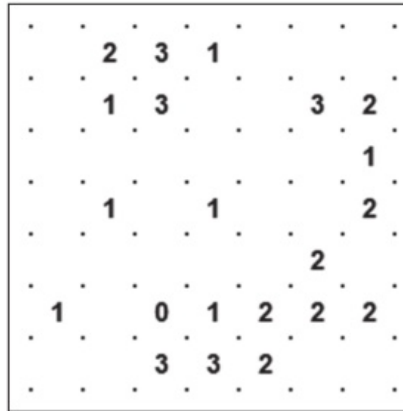
(Fig A)



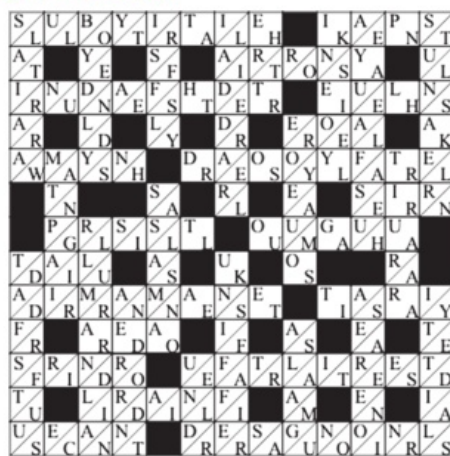
(Fig B)  
Not Allowed

### How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.  
 Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



## Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

## Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



### ACROSS

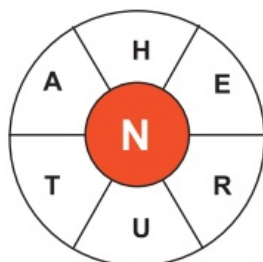
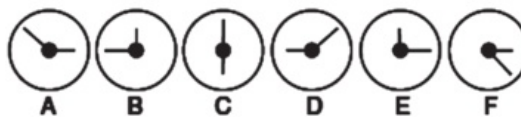
- 1 A Pisa; 6 Rales;
- 7 Skirt; 8 Hevea;
- 9 Low AI

### DOWN

- 1 Hap as; 2 Later;
- 3 All II; 4 Overs;
- 5 Wakes

## Mensapuzzle

Which does not belong in this sequence?



## Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

17 Average; 19 Good; 21 Outstanding

## SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

## Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



### Easy

1 3 7 7 = 18

### Medium

2 3 5 7 = 30

### Hard

2 5 7 3 = 12

## Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Part of ribbon is missing. 2. Pillow is smaller. 3. Bow is larger. 4. Wall is wider. 5. Arm is moved. 6. Shirt has a V-neck.

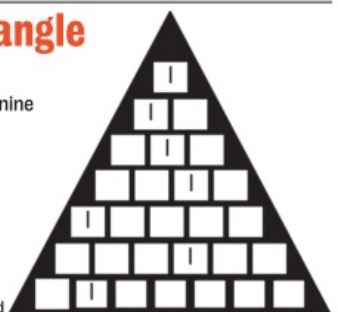
## Riddler

Where should you go to find the meaning of life?

## Alpha triangle

- 1 Pronoun
- 2 Less more
- 3 Command to a canine
- 4 Court case
- 5 Recurring beat
- 6 Picasso, for one
- 7 Cookie

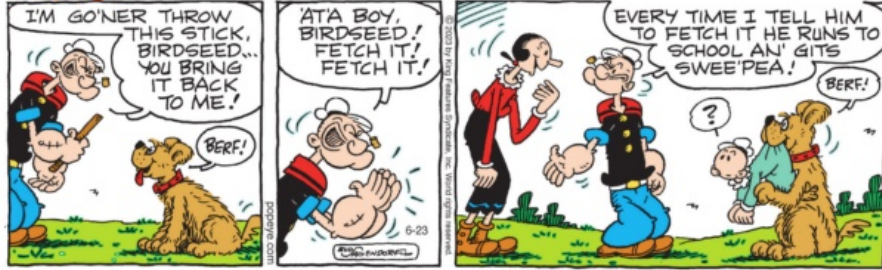
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be



made at each step answering to the clue given.

## COMICS

## Popeye



## Bizarrotrip



## Diamond Lil



## Hart of the city



## Crankshaft



## Mutts



## WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

## Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

Today you may feel healthy and be able to focus towards your goals. Your performance may be very good at work. Your boss may be happy with you and you may get some important responsibilities at work. You may hear some good news in a legal matter. You are likely to gain control over your opponents and business rivals.



## Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

Today, you may be able to control your expenditure on worthless things, which may increase your savings. You may be more creative today, and you may use your creativity at the office or at home, which may enhance your social status. Love birds are likely to get some support from their family members for marriage. Students may hear good news in terms of academics.



## Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

Today, your mother's health may be good. You may enjoy work and you may get rewards after hard work. Your social respect may be increased now. Overworking your mind may make you tired, due to workload, you may not be able to reach some family event.



## Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

Today, you may feel negativity around you. You may find your responsibilities as a burden. You may be in a hurry to complete a task given to you. You may make silly mistakes. Your working efficiency may be slowed down, which may affect your day-to-day work. Your projects are likely to be delayed, and that affects your professional life. You are advised to take advice from your elders or a consultant, before taking any important decision.



## Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

Today, your willpower may help you start some new innovations on the work front. You are likely to get a big order in your parental business, which will increase growth in the business, in the near future. New responsibilities at your job may keep you busy. Jobseekers might get a good job. Understanding with the spouse may be improved, which can help maintain harmony in the family life.



## Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Today you may be satisfied with work. You may plan for a short work-related trip. You may also visit some religious places to maintain your inner peace. Your gurus may show you the right path, which may give you clarity regarding your goals.



## Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

Today you may prefer gaining knowledge, as you may understand the value of intellectual assets. Sometimes you may control your short temper, which may help you to perform your task smoothly. There may be some chance for a smooth earning, which may give you comfort in the workflow. You are advised to be careful before making new investments in assets. You are likely to spend money for love. Love birds may enjoy happy moments.



## Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

Today, you may face health issues, which may make you impatient. You may spend your hard-earned money buying worthless items. You are advised to control your short temper. Love birds are advised to avoid discussions on frivolous topics, otherwise they might experience some break up.



## Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

Today you may feel dull. It is advised to keep your mind cool and it is a golden rule for you to think twice before acting. You may travel to recover your money otherwise you may lose your money. You are also advised to avoid going on adventurous tours. Students are advised to go for in-depth study to get success.



## Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

Today, you may be enthusiastic and more focused, which may speed up your postponed projects. Your subordinates may help you start a new project, which may give you profits in the near future. You may expect some short trips related to your family issues. Job seekers may hear good news in terms of jobs.



## Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

Today, you may meet some influential person, who may help you in the progress of your work. Your network will be strong with the help of that person. You may prepare yourself to implement new ideas into your work or business. You will plan to invest more capital into your business, which may give you financial gains in the near future. In terms of domestic life, you will be busy with family get-togethers and social events.

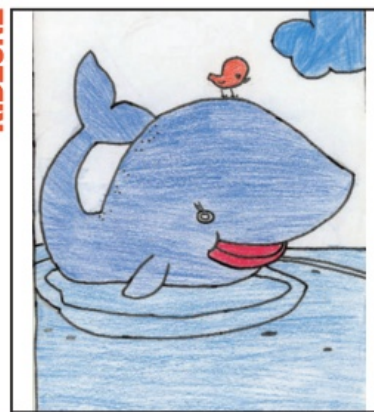


## Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

Today you may feel good and domestic harmony may make you happy. You may meet some influential person to get some benefits on the work front. You are likely to perform well at your job. You may expect some rewards in terms of promotions. Disputes in inherited property are likely to settle down.



## KIDZONE



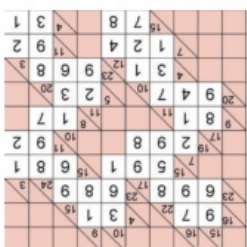
Anuka  
Varsha,  
13 Years,  
Aryan  
Presidency  
School



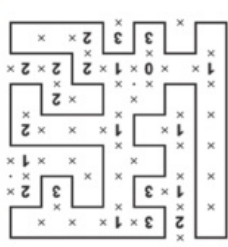
Ankith,  
12 Years,  
Dev Matha Central  
School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

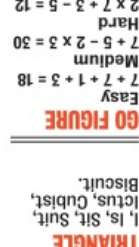
## SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



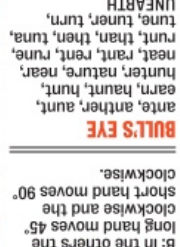
LOOP



ALPHA



SUDOKU



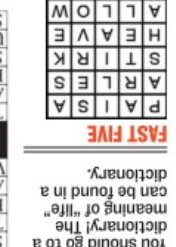
MENSA PUZZLE



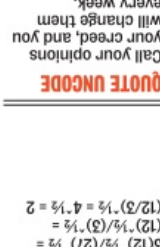
QUICK



STRIKE OUT



RIDDLE



QUOTE UNCODE



## SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

### Different role

Anoop Revanna, who debuted with the film Lakshmana and played Fayaz in Kabazaa, is eager for the release of his latest Hide & Seek that is scheduled for release on March 15. "Hide & Seek will be a special movie



for me as I played a different role. I play a kidnapper for the first time in my acting career. I am lucky to get a chance to play a character that has two different shades," said Anoop.

Hide & Seek is Anoop's fourth movie. Punith Nagaraj and Vasanth M Rao Kulkarni have bankrolled the movie under the Suneri Arts Creations banner. Besides bankrolling the movie, Punith Nagaraj has written the script, screenplay and directed it.

### Sequel ready

Avatara Purusha became a huge hit in 2022. Sharan and Ashika Ranganath were the lead pair and the movie catapulted them to fame. Now, director Simple Suni is planning to release its sequel - Avatara Purusha 2. The movie is expected to be released on March 22 at theaters across the state. Pushkar Mallikarjunaiah has bankrolled the movie.

Simple Suni said that his friends and well-wishers have been enquiring with



him about the release date of Avatara Purusha 2. Apart from Sharan and Ashika Ranganath, the movie features Srinagar Kitty, Saikumar, Sadhu Kokila, Sudha Rani, and Bhavya.

# Proud sis

Deepika is all praise for Anisha's achievement



Anisha Padukone, CEO of Deepika Padukone's NGO, has received an award for social impact. Deepika proudly shared her joy on Instagram Stories, celebrating her sister's achievement.

Upon Anisha's reception of the prestigious award, Deepika expressed her delight on Instagram. The accomplished actress shared the post announcing the achievement and captioned it, "My little one Anisha Padukone," accompanied by a white heart emoji.

Deepika's most recent appearance was in 'Fighter,' released in January of this year. Next, Deepika is set to appear in the highly anticipated sci-fi movie 'Kalki

2898 AD,' directed by Nag Ashwin. This big-budget pan-India film features an ensemble cast

including Prabhas, Amitabh Bachchan, and Kamal Haasan. The world-wide release date for the film is scheduled for

May 9, 2024.

Following 'Kalki 2898 AD,' Deepika is set to star in 'Singam Again,' led by Ajay Devgn. This installment marks the third in the beloved Singam franchise and the fifth part of the Rohit Shetty cop universe. Deepika joins the franchise as a new addition and will portray the character of Lady Singham. Her first look from the film, revealed last year, garnered widespread acclaim from netizens.

-ETimes

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